



Resolution - Emergency Ordinance
COVID-19 Pandemic: Municipal Charges and Property Tax Relief
May 18, 2020

The City Council hereby resolves, as follows:

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of Vermont has, by Executive Order No. 01-20 dated March 13, 2020, declared a State of Emergency for the State of Vermont in response to the spread of COVID-19 in the State; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Order has been modified and supplemented by several Addenda (the Executive Order together with the Addenda are collectively referred to herein as the "Executive Order"); and

WHEREAS, the Executive Order has significantly restricted the conduct of business and daily life in the State in order to restrict and halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus, including by directing the closure of in-person operations for all non-essential businesses, dismissing schools for the remainder of the current school year, ordering the closure of all close-contact businesses, ordering the closure of all bars and restaurants, requiring Vermonters to not leave home except for specified reasons, and restricting non-essential gatherings to ten or less people, among other measures; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature has approved and the Governor signed S.344 that "proposes to authorize the legislative body of a municipal corporation to:...(2) reduce or waive penalties, interest, and fees for late payment of property taxes...."; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of such restrictions, the businesses, livelihoods, and income of Winooski residents and taxpayers have been disrupted; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that such disruption will make it difficult for some of its taxpayers to make payments for property taxes and other municipal charges in a timely manner, and thus may threaten the security of their homes, or the viability of their businesses or work environment. This would be a significant public health threat during this time when Vermonters are being asked to stay at home; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to ameliorate these impacts within the limits of its statutory and Charter authority; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has the authority under Charter §19-403 to adopt emergency ordinances to meet a public emergency affecting life, health, property or the public peace;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the authority granted to it under Charter §19-403, the City Council hereby adopts, within a new Chapter 30 of the Winooski City Code, a new section 30.01, as follows:

Chapter 30 – Emergency Ordinances

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

Pursuant to Section 19-403 of the Charter of the City of Winooski, this Chapter is adopted to document any emergency ordinances promulgated by the City Council from time to time.

ARTICLE II – TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Section 30.01 COVID-19 Pandemic: Municipal Charges and Property Tax Relief

ARTICLE III – EMERGENCY ORDINANCES

SECTION 30.01. COVID-19 PANDEMIC: MUNICIPAL CHARGES AND PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

- A. A state of emergency exists throughout the State of Vermont, pursuant to Executive Order 01-20 issued by the Governor of the State of Vermont and dated March 13, 2020, and supplemented by Addenda issued since that date. The state of emergency was declared to address the spread of COVID-19 throughout the State, including in the City of Winooski. The measures required by the Executive Order and its Addenda have disrupted the business and civic life of the City, and may have significant financial repercussions for some taxpayers in the City.
- B. To assist those taxpayers whose ability to pay non-optional municipal charges or the property tax payment due on May 15, 2020 have been impaired as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures imposed to limit or halt it, the following provisions are hereby adopted:
 - 1) The May 15, 2020 due date for City water and sewer bills shall be extended to June 15, 2020;
 - 2) All penalty and interest payments on late water and sewer charges from FY20 Quarter 4 will not start accruing until July 15, 2020, 30 days from the extended due date.

- 3) Any penalty and interest on late property tax payments for FY20 Quarter 4 will not start accruing until June 15, 2020, 30 days from the payment deadline of May 15.
- 4) The Tax Collector shall be instructed to suspend tax sale processes immediately and through June 30, 2021.
- C. This Ordinance shall be effective upon enactment. As required by Charter §19-403, this Ordinance shall expire as of midnight on the 31st day following the date of its enactment. The date of enactment is May 18, 2020.

Affirmative Vote:

Mayor

Councilor

Councilor

Councilor

Councilor

Attest (City Clerk)

Adopted Date